

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5415

As of January 31, 2001

Title: An act relating to providing chemical dependency treatment service to minors upon request.

Brief Description: Requiring providing of chemical dependency treatment services to minors upon request.

Sponsors: Senators Patterson, Long, Hargrove, Stevens, Winsley, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 2/1/01.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Robert Antanaitis (786-7452)

Background: Voluntary chemical dependency treatment is provided within available funds only. The ability of chemical dependency specialists to petition, and courts to order, the involuntary commitment of a person for chemical dependency treatment is limited by the availability of funds and current program space.

Concerns have been expressed that limiting these programs on the basis of funding and availability has led to a situation where minors who need treatment are being denied.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Voluntary chemical dependency treatment is provided to minors without regard to the availability of funds when medically appropriate.

If a minor 13 years of age or older requests inpatient treatment or an evaluation of the appropriateness of inpatient treatment and his or her parent refuses to consent, either may file a petition under the Family Reconciliation Act.

The involuntary commitment of minors for chemical dependency treatment occurs without regard to the availability of funds or current program availability. Chemical dependency specialists may file a petition for involuntary treatment of a minor without first determining that appropriate placement is available. Courts are not precluded from ordering the involuntary commitment of a minor if an appropriate placement is not currently available.

The county prosecutor must represent chemical dependency specialists and treatment programs in commitment-related proceedings.

The state must provide appropriate chemical dependency treatment services to indigent minors.

County-designated chemical dependency specialists are trained in adolescent chemical dependency issues, the chemical dependency commitment laws, and the criteria for commitment.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 2001.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.